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**→ Dimensions of Culture and Global Web User-Interface Design**

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**→ Presentation Summary**

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Definition of Globalization
- 3. Globalization Design Process
- 4. Dimensions of Culture
- 5. Cultural Analysis of the Web
- 6. Conclusion

Acknowledgements: Dr. Geert Hofstede, Institute for Research on Intercultural Affairs, Maastricht, The Netherlands, and Prof. Emilie West Gould, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY.

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**→ Background of AM+A**

- AM: First computer graphics designer: 1967
- AM: Started AM+A in 1982
- AM+A helped design "first" version of AOL
- Designed Sabre UI, Getty Museum Website
- Designed for DARPA, US Fed Reserve Bank
- Designing advanced UIs for Samsung, Visa
- Projects in Japan, Korea, Jordan, Finland

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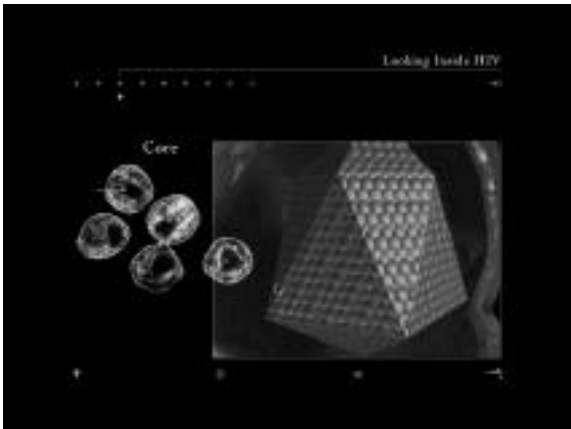
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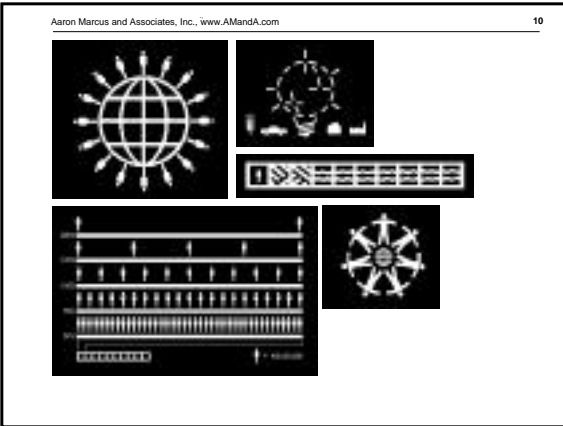
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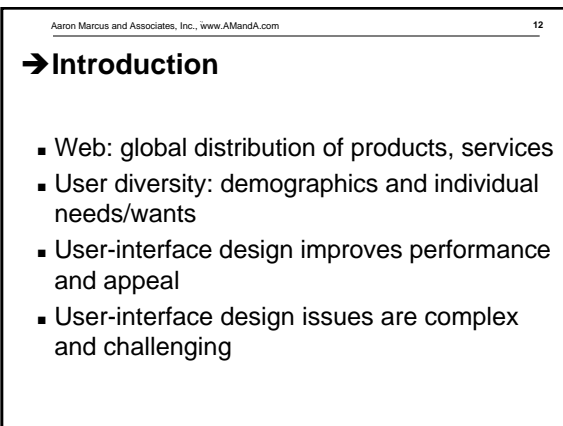
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**→ User-Interface and Information-Visualization Design**

- User-interface components
  - **Metaphors:** ideas via words, images, sounds
  - **Mental Models:** structures
  - **Navigation:** movement
  - **Interaction:** input/output, feedback
  - **Appearance:** visual, acoustic, tactile
- Information visualization: tables, charts, maps, diagrams

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**→ 2. Definition of Globalization**

- Globalization issues and UI+IV Design:
  - International: standardized, “universal”
  - Intercultural: differences between two
  - Localization: customized, part or whole

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**→ International Issues**

- Geographic, political, linguistic:
  - Example: ISO CRT-color, icon, and UI standards
  - Example: Canadian bilingual requirements
  - Example: Currency, time, physical measurements

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**→ Intercultural**

- Religious, historical, aesthetic:
  - Example: calendars
  - Example: color/type/signs/terms

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**→ Example: A Present from India**



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**→ Example: Inside the Box**



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**→ Localization**

- Small-scale communities with preferred jargon, signs, rituals:
  - Affinity group example: USA Saturn owners
  - Social group example: Japanese housewives
  - Web group example (geographically dispersed): MP3.com

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**→ Business Challenges affect Design**

- Determine optimum characteristics: relies on market and user data
- Assist and appeal to target markets: achieves short-term and long-term success
- Avoid too many variations: wastes time and money

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**→ 3. Globalization Design Process**

- **Plan:** include GD issues in all steps
- **Research:** investigate sets of users
- **Analyze:** determine key criteria, targets
- **Design:** visualize alternatives
- **Implement:** use tools that facilitate variations
- **Evaluate:** test prototypes with user sets
- **Document:** include GD guideline, specs

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**→ Topics of General Guidelines for Globalization**

- User demographics
- Technology
- Metaphors
- Mental models
- Navigation
- Interaction
- Appearance

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**→ Guidelines Example: Appearance Details for Color**

- Follow perceptual guides for legibility, warm/cool, 5±2 variations
- Respect national, cultural, religious usage
  - Sacred examples: white/blue/gold (Western) vs. green/blue (Arab) vs. yellow (Buddhist)
- Use of warning/danger colors (yellow/red)
- Consider attitudes toward high- vs low-chroma (pastel) colors

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**→ Example: Color Sets**

- Sacred Colors

- High- vs Low-Chroma Colors

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**→ Aesthetics: Dionysus/Apollo**

- Cultural preferences exist for layout, textures, patterns, colors
- Europe/USA/Chinese/Japanese/Indian architecture, painting, sculpture exhibit them
- Traditional vs popular styles:  
Japan: highest = B+W, asymmetric balance
- Specific attitudes: body parts, Harel, Prabhu research in China, Japan

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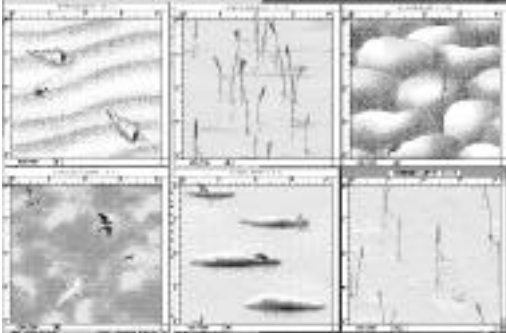
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**→ Ex: Finnish Backgrounds**



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**→ 4. Dimensions of Culture**

- Theorists
- Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions
- Cultural issues

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**→ Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions**

- *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, Geert Hofstede, McGraw-Hill, 1997
- Hofstede examined IBM employees in 50 countries, 1978-83
- Statistically valid data and analysis
- Our focus....

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**→ Culture: Learned, not Inherited**

- Culture 1 = civilization, refinement of the mind; *not* Hofstede's focus
- Culture 2 = software of the mind = patterns of thinking, feeling, acting programmed by a particular group (nation or organization); Hofstede's focus
- Cultural differences = differences of cultural manifestations: symbols, heroes, rituals, values

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**→ Hofstede's 5 Dimensions of Culture**

- 4.1. Power-distance
- 4.2. Collectivism vs. individualism
- 4.3. Femininity vs. masculinity
- 4.4. Uncertainty avoidance
- 4.5. Long- vs. short-term orientation

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**→ 4.1. Power Distance (PD)**

- Extent to which less powerful members expect, accept unequal power distribution
- High PD countries
  - Centralized power in few hands; tall hierarchies
  - Ideal boss = benevolent autocrat, good father
  - Subordinates expected to be told what to do
- Low PD countries
  - Subs and Supers consider each other equals
  - Changeable roles; decentralized, flat hierarchy

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**→ Key Differences:  
High Power Distance**

- Inequalities expected and desired
- Theory: Less powerful dependent on more
- Reality: polarization of dep vs. counterdep
- Parents teach obedience; are respected
- Teachers: initiate, give wisdom, respected
- Orgs hierarchical, centralized; big sal range
- Boss = benevolent autocrat; subs reactive
- Mgr privileges, status expected, popular

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**→ Key Differences:  
Low Power Distance**

- Inequalities minimized; interdependence
- Parents/children treat/ed as equals
- Teachers treated as equals; co-initiate
- More educ person has less authority values
- Hierarchy in orgs: unequal roles convenient
- Decentral popular; narrow salary ranges
- Subs consulted; few privileges, status symbols
- Boss = resourceful democrat

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**→ Implications for Global Design, 1/2**

- Access to information (wideband/structured)
- Emphasis on larger social/ moral order (e.g. nationalism/ religion brought into web context)
- Focus on expertise (content presented as authoritative)
- Prominence given to leaders rather than customers/employees

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**→ Implications for Global Design, 2/2**

- Integration with security packages: transparency of restrictions
- Importance of certifications, awards, logos
- Social role used to organize information (e.g. special managers' sections)

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**→ Examples of PD Index (PDI) in Web**

Contrasting University Websites:

- Malaysia (PDI rating of 104; highest in Hofstede's index)
  - www.uum.edu.my (Universiti Utara Malaysia)
- Netherlands (PDI = 38; 40/53)
  - www.ichthus-rdam.nl (Ichthus Hogeschool)
  - www.tue.nl (Technische Universiteit Eindhoven)

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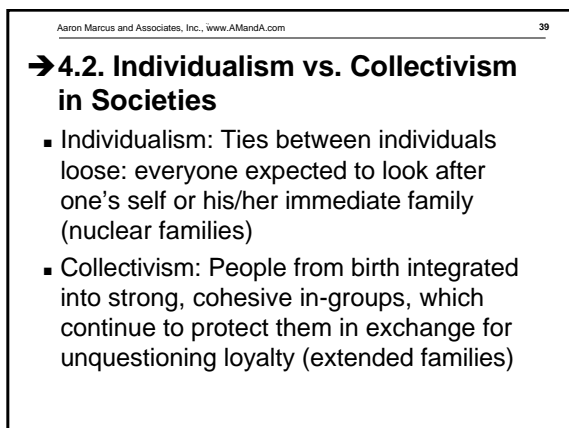
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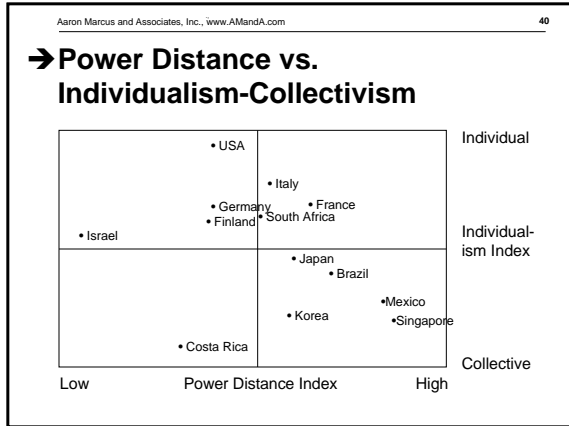
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- ### → Examples of Individualism vs. Collectivism
- Work: Personal time, freedom, challenge vs. training, physical conditions, use of skills
  - Extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivation at work: Conditions, material rewards vs. work itself
  - Family: Honesty/truth vs. harmony
    - Talking vs not talking
    - Guilt cultures vs. shame cultures
    - Self-respect vs. face

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- ### → Key Differences: Individualism
- Individual soc/econ interests over collective
  - Right to privacy; private opinions expected
  - Laws and rights same for all
  - Restrained state in economy; high GNP/capita
  - Political power of voters; press freedom
  - Individual self-actualism = ultimate goal
  - Ideology of freedom

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**→ Key Differences: Collectivism**

- Collective soc/econ interests over individual
- Group(s) invade private life, opinions
- Laws/rights per group; state controls press
- State dominates economy; low GNP/cap
- Political power of interest groups
- Harmony and consensus = ultimate goals
- Ideology of equality

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**→ Implications for Global Design: Individualism**

- Focus on maximizing personal achievement ("Expect the extraordinary")
- Materialism and consumerism demonstrate individual success
- Controversial/ argumentative speech and extreme claims encouraged ("truth")
- Images of youth/ activity rather than age/ wisdom ("doing," not "being")

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**→ Implications for Global Design: Collectivism**

- Individual roles downplayed (e.g. product shown on its own); focus may be on group
- Personal goals often intrinsic
- Preference for socially supportive and constrained claims; controversy discouraged because of its tendency to divide people (relationships, not truth)
- Respect for tradition (historical focus)

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**→ Examples of Individualism/Collectivism on the Web**

National Parks:

- Individualism: United States (IDV = 91; highest rating)
  - [www.nps.gov/glba/evc.htm](http://www.nps.gov/glba/evc.htm) (Glacier Bay National Park)
- Collectivism: Costa Rica (IDV = 15; 46/53)
  - [www.tourism-costarica.com/](http://www.tourism-costarica.com/) (National Parks of Costa Rica)

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**→ Glacier Bay National Park**



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "Historic Visitors Center". The main content area features a large, high-quality photograph of a winding river or path through a mountainous, forested landscape. Below the image, there are several text boxes and links, including "Historic Visitors Center" and "Historic Park Area". The layout is clean and professional, typical of a government or national park website.

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**→ National Parks of Costa Rica**



The screenshot shows a web browser window with a dark background. The main content area features a collage of various natural scenes, including mountains, waterfalls, and forests. The text "National Parks of Costa Rica" is visible at the top of the collage. The layout is visually rich and emphasizes the natural beauty of the parks.

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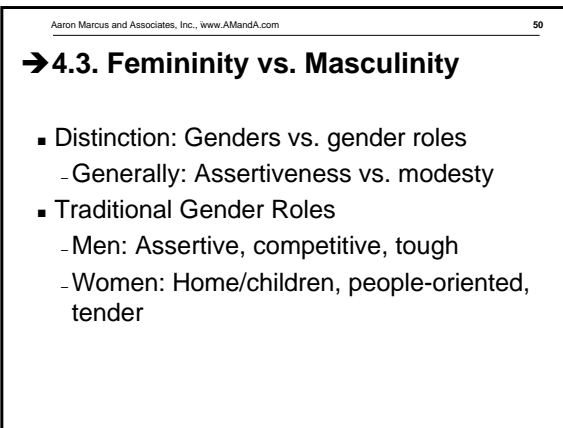
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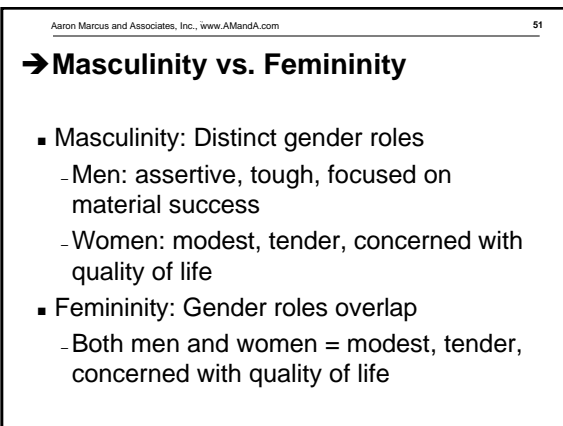
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**→ Masculinity Index Values for Selected Countries**

- 95 Japan
- 79 Austria (Mexico = 69)
- 62 USA (South Africa = 63)
- 53 Arab countries
- 47 Israel
- 43 France
- 39 South Korea
- 05 Sweden

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**→ Power Distance vs. Masculinity**

Country	Power Distance Index	Masculinity Index
Austria	Low	High
Japan	High	High
Italy	High	High
South Africa	High	High
Mexico	High	High
USA	Low	High
Singapore	High	Low
South Korea	High	Low
Finland	Low	Low
Norway	Low	Low
Sweden	Low	Low

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**→ Implications for Global Design: Masculinity**

- Traditional gender/ family/ age distinctions emphasized; work tasks/ roles given preference
- Mastery most important; Websites designed for exploration and control
- Games/ competitions held grab attention
- Artwork may be utilitarian/ instrumental

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**→ Implications for Global Design: Femininity**

- Gender/ work roles blurred
- Mutual exchange and support more important than mastery; Website should be task-oriented and provide quick results for limited task
- Poetry/unifying values may focus attention
- Natural images, traditional art, soft focus used to generate emotional/aesthetic appeal

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**→ Examples of Masculinity/ Femininity on the Web**

Gender-oriented sites:

- Masculinity: Japan = 95 (highest MAS)
  - woman.excite.co.jp - women's site
  - www.isize.com/top - site for young adults
- US = 52 (15/53)
  - www.chickclick.com
- Femininity: Sweden = 5 (lowest of 53 nations)
  - se.excite.com

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**→ Excite: For Japanese Males, with Cars/Stocks Information**



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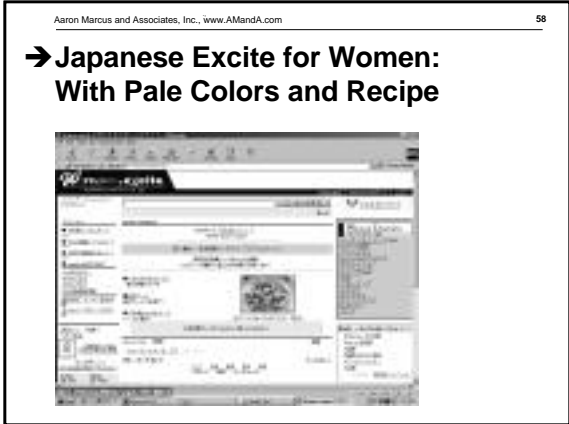
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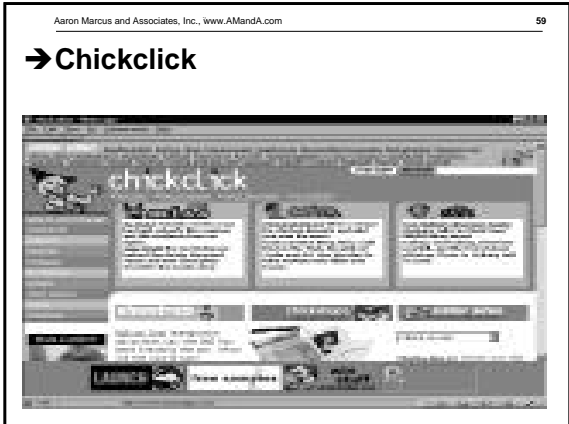
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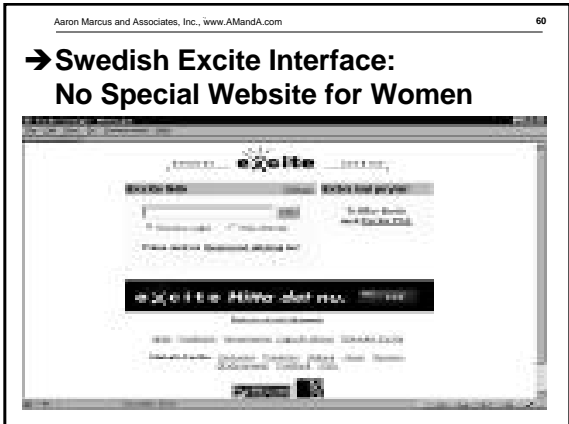
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**→4.4. Uncertainty Avoidance**

- Feeling threatened by uncertain/unknown
- Fear/risk vs. Anxiety: known vs. unknown
- Countries vary in formality, punctuality, certainty requirements
- Extreme uncertainty creates intolerable anxiety; law, religion seek to reduce it
- Intolerance of ambiguity = variant of uncertainty avoidance

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**→Low Uncertainty-Avoidance Countries, 1/2**

- Quiet, easy-going, indolent, controlled, lazy. (subjective view)
- What is different is curious, (or perhaps in some, ridiculous)
- Schools: students respect plain language, accept teacher who says, "I don't know."
- Positive relation between high uncertainty avoidance in (developed country) and maximum speed on freeways

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**→Low Uncertainty Avoidance Countries, 2/2**

- Could not use uncertainty avoidance index to look at occupation, gender differences. Only age shows close relationship.
- Definitions of clean/dirty; safe/dangerous differ widely by country
- "Cultures with [high] uncertainty avoidance need categories of dangerous others to defend themselves from."

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**→ High Uncertainty Avoidance Countries, 1/2**

- People seem busy, emotional, aggressive, active (subjective view)
- Shun ambiguous situations; look for structure in organizations, institutions, and relations that make events clearly interpretable and predictable
- Prepared to engage in risky behavior to reduce ambiguities, like starting a fight, instead of waiting

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**→ High Uncertainty-Avoidance Countries, 2/2**

- Equate dirty and dangerous tightly
- Seem to need categories of dangerous others to defend themselves from (can lead to racism)
- What is different is dangerous
- Schools: expect teachers to be experts with all the answers

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**→ Implications for Global Design: High UA**

- Keep it simple
- Results/ implications of actions need to be revealed
- Make attempt to prevent looping/ becoming "lost in cyberspace"
- Constraints/ task animations/ models should be used to reduce "user error"
- Carefully encode meaning through multiple redundant cues

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**→ Implications for Global Design:  
Low UA**

- Complexity and risk valued:  
don't protect users from failure
- Links open new windows; OK to take people  
out of original site: little effort put into  
controlling navigation
- Help system focuses on information; task  
orientation secondary
- Coding of color/ shape/ texture cues used to  
maximize information; need not be redundant

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**→ Examples of Uncertainty Avoidance  
on the Web**

Airline Companies:

- Belgium = 94 (highest UAI value)  
- www.sabena.com
- UK = 35 (47/53)  
- www.britishairways.com

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**→ Sabena**



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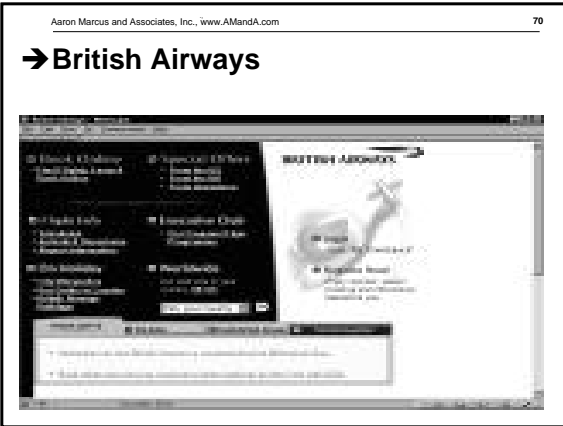
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**→ 4.5. Long vs Short Term: Confucian Dynamism, the 5th Dimension**

- 1. Stable society requires unequal relations
- 2. Family is prototype of all social organizations
- 3. Virtuous behavior to others = not treating others as one would not like to be treated
- 4. Virtue re one's task in life = trying to acquire skills and education, working hard, being frugal, being patient, persevering

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**→ Long-term orientation (LTO)  
Ranking for Some of 23 Countries**

- 01 China
- 04 Japan
- 17 USA
- 22 Nigeria
- 23 Pakistan

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**→ Virtue vs Truth**

- Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) vs Chinese value survey (CVS)
- "...the Indian and the Chinese minds seem to take a position different from the Western one when it comes to the need for defining Truth."
- Search for truth (belief-oriented) vs search for virtue (practice-oriented)

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**→ Comparing Studies of Culture**

- Three dimensions appear across all cultures: power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculine-feminine
- Fourth dimension depends on culture:
  - Western: UA = search for truth
  - Eastern: Confucian dynamism, or long-term orientation = search for virtue

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**→ Implications for Global Design:  
Long-Term Orientation**

- Practice more important than theory
- Accomplishing the task sufficient; expertise not required
- Personal network provides resources for achievement

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→ **How to Work with Cultural Models: Examples from China and Germany**

- Honold, Pia, "Learning How to Use a Cellular Phone: Comparison Between German and Chinese Users," *Journal of Society of Technical Communication*, Vol. 46, No. 2, May 1999, pp. 196-205.

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→ **Example: Siemens German Website**



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→ **Example: Siemens Chinese Website**



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**→ 5. Harmony in a Multicultural World, 1/2**

- Hofstede calls for some cultural relativism: no absolute criteria for low, noble activities
- No human being can escape from using value standards all the time; otherwise, no identity

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**→ Harmony in a Multicultural World, 2/2**

- No need to think, feel, act identically to agree on practical issues and to cooperate
- People with high UA and high PD will be more difficult, slower
- Little evidence of cultural convergence
- Differences among and within countries increasing
- Designers must be sensitive to cultures

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**→ Summary of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions**

- Power-distance
- Collectivism vs. individualism
- Femininity vs. masculinity
- Uncertainty avoidance
- Long-term vs. short-term orientation

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**→ 6. Conclusion**

- Web UI+IV design is immediately global
- Develop specifications per target markets
- Resources of information exist
- Design, evaluate, document variations

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Aaron Marcus and Associates, Inc., www.AMandA.com 83

**→ Selected References, 1/2**

- DelGaldo and Nielsen, ed., *International User Interfaces*, 1996
- Fernandes, *Global Interf. Design*, 1995
- Hall, *The Hidden Dimension*, 1965
- Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 1997
- Honold, German vs. Chinese study
- Marcus, "Internat. and Intercult. UIs," in *UIs. for All*, Stephanidis, ed., 1999

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Aaron Marcus and Associates, Inc., www.AMandA.com 84

**→ Selected References, 2/2**

- Nielsen, ed., *Designing User Interfaces for International Use*, 1990
- Harel and Prabhu, "Global User Experience (GLUE), Design for Cultural Diversity: Japan, China,...India," Proc. IWIPS-99, Rochester, ISBN 0-9656691, pp. 205-216
- Stephanidis, ed., *User Interfaces for All*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000
- Trompenaars, *Riding the Waves of Culture*, 1998

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Aaron Marcus and Associates, Inc., www.AMandA.com 85

**→ Information Sources**

- AM+A bookmark collection
- Lecture article available at AM+A Website: See [www.AMandA.com/Resources/Human Factors and the Web 2000](http://www.AMandA.com/Resources/HumanFactorsandtheWeb2000)
- Article text published in ACM SIGCHI's *Interactions*, July/August 2000: See [www.acm.org](http://www.acm.org))
- LISA organization: [www.lisa.org](http://www.lisa.org)

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Aaron Marcus and Associates, Inc., www.AMandA.com 86

**→ Other Info Sources**

- Cross-cultural color: [www.ColorTool.com](http://www.ColorTool.com)
- IWIPS-00, 13-15 July 2000
- CHI-99 HCII-99: Cultural Diversity Panels
- CHI2000 Tutorial: Cultural Diversity
- HCII-01 Tutorials and Panels
- Simple Eng:[www.userlab.com/SE.html](http://www.userlab.com/SE.html)
- LISA Localization Industry Primer: [www.usa-lisa.org/globalseminar/Default.htm](http://www.usa-lisa.org/globalseminar/Default.htm)

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**→ AM+A Diversity Resources, 1/4**

- Color and Culture  
<http://www.ColorTool.com/>. Microsoft researcher used Berlin and Kay's basic color terms
- Culture Bank  
<http://www.culturebank.com/>.
- Dictionary, Calif Central Coast  
<http://www.multimedia.calpoly.edu/libarts/ccod.NYT240699D10>: Prof. John Battenburg, prof of linguistics and literature, CalPolySU, created it with students about 1y ago. 400 defs, pronunc, and ex sentences w photos and videos
- Digital Divide/Closing  
<http://www.digitaldivide.gov/>. NYT270100: "Put together by the Commerce Dept, provides ext info re gov's involvement in the DigDiv, plus links.
- Digital Divide/Network  
<http://www.digitaldividenetwork.org/>. NYT270100: "Sponsored by Benton Foundation with help of 12 corps. Another clearinghouse for gov agencies, private firms, founds, nonprofits looking fo info on techgy gap.
- Digital Divide/Solutions  
<http://www.digitaldivide.org/>. NYT270100: "Companion Website to conf held in Seattle, Nov 99. Useful links.
- Diversity/Blacks/Bet.com  
<http://www.bet.com/>. NYT 120899

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### → AM+A Diversity Resources, 2/4

- DiversityBlacks/BlackFamilies.com  
<http://www.blackfamilies.com/>. NYT 120899 B1: homey site from interactive div of Cox Enterprises, has recipes for peach cobbler and taffy apple salad, extensive areas for parenting and relationships, all aimed at blacks.
- DiversityBlacks/Blackvoices.com  
<http://www.blackvoices.com/>. NYT 120899: started in 95 by a former editor at the Orlando Sentinel's online site, cofunded by Tribune Co's vc and interactive divs, community oriented with emphasis on jobs, chat, and msg boards
- DiversityBlacks/MSBet.com  
<http://www.msбет.com/>. NYT 120899 B1: modest site, joint venture of Bet and MSoft, features listings for cable prgrmmg of Black Entertainment Television. Big \$ from MSoft, Uperit Murdoch, Barry Diller, and John Malone could transform it into ambitious port.
- DiversityBlacks/NetNoir.com  
<http://www.netnoir.com/>. NYT 120899 B1: one of oldest black site, with 20% ownership by AOL, draws following of hip yuppies, only small pool of vc's, which has prevented it from breaking out. Hopes to break out with new round of \$.
- DiversityIndia  
<http://www.india.gov.org/culture/overview.htm>. Comprehensive info on India's languages, culture, history, religion, monuments, music, etc.

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### → AM+A Diversity Resources, 3/4

- Diversity/JapanForKids  
<http://www.jn-japan.org/kidsweb/>. Comprehensive site intro for kids to Jap history, culture, religion, geography, govt, etc.
- DiversityNativeAmericans  
<http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/>. A good index of Native American resources.
- DiversityTeens/Bolt.com  
<http://www.bolt.com/>.
- DiversityTeens/DoughNet.com  
<http://www.doughNET.com/>. SFE 290699 C1
- DiversityTeens/CanBuy.com  
<http://www.icanbuy.com/>. SFE 290699 C1
- DiversityTeens/Rocketcash.com  
<http://www.rocketcash.com/>. SFE 290699 C1
- DiversityWomen/ChickClick.com

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### → AM+A Diversity Resources, 4/4

- <http://www.chickclick.com/>.
- Global Internet Statistics (by Language)  
<http://www.euromktg.com/globetats/index.html>.
- IWIPS99  
<http://www.webctr.net/IWIPS99/>.
- Nancy Hoft Consulting: Reading on the Web about...  
[http://www.world-ready.com/r\\_intl.htm](http://www.world-ready.com/r_intl.htm).
- Nancy Hoft Consulting: Sources in International...  
<http://www.world-ready.com/biblio.htm>
- Simplified English  
<http://www.userlab.com/SE.html>
- WholeTree.com  
<http://www.wholetree.com/>. NYT270100: 800-694-4050 USA, 719-955-3400 Global, wholly owned sub of LanguageWare.net. "World's leading multilingual ebiz provicer...can turn ebiz into global success [with] native tongues. 80% of world doesn't speak English.

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